REMARKS

Claims 3, 5, 9, 11 and 13-16 are pending in the present application. With entry of this Amendment, Applicant cancels claims 5, 9, 11 and 13-16 without prejudice and adds new claims 17 and 18 which depend from remaining claim 3.

The Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gruenbaum (5565641) in view of Cakewalk User's Manual. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

The present invention is directed to an electronic musical instrument connected to a computer keyboard. The present invention can assign function modules to key regions of the computer keyboard. For example, as illustrated in Fig. 9, the alphabet/symbol key region has been assigned the VOICE NAME function module. Fig. 9 also illustrates that the user is selecting the VOICE function module for ten key region 1. Assigning a function module to an entire region is advantageous, because it avoids repetitively assigning the same function to each key in a region. It also allows the user to begin a function by operating any key in the region of the computer keyboard rather than a specific key. Moreover, it avoids operating a plurality of keys on the electronic musical instrument which has limited area for operating switches and displays.

The present invention also allows a user to assign characters, symbols or numerical values to given keys of the computer keyboard. Fig. 7 illustrates an example of a key being assigned a character, symbol or numerical value.

Once a user operates a given key, the present invention executes a function (if any) corresponding to the key region of the operated key. Moreover, the present invention delivers the character, symbol or numerical value assigned to the operated key to the function module. This is advantageous, because the user can select a function and provide an input with the operation of a single key.

Applicant has amended claim 3 to recite an assigning device that assigns function modules to a key region comprising a plurality of keys. Claim 3 recites "a first assigning device that

la-795281

assigns function modules respectively to the key regions of said keyboard connected via said connection terminal and said second connection interface . . . ." Claim 3, as amended, also recites "a second assignment device that assigns characters, symbols, or numerical values respectively to the keys of said keyboard connected to said electronic musical instrument . . . ." Claim 3, as amended, further recites "when one of the function modules is assigned to the operated key region, said execution device causes the input character, the input symbol or the input numerical value to be delivered to the function module assigned to the operated key region."

Gruenbaum and Cakewalk fail to disclose or suggest any of these three recitations.

First, Gruenbaum and Cakewalk do not disclose or suggest that a user can assign a function to a key region having a plurality of keys. Gruenbaum discloses assigning a function to a key and Cakewalk discloses macro assignment of commands to a key. Thus, both references merely disclose the cumbersome approach of individual key assignments. Neither reference discloses assigning a function to an entire key region as claimed in the present application.

Second, Gruenbaum and Cakewalk do not disclose the recited second assignment device that assigns characters, symbols or numerical values to a key of a keyboard. Applicant has reviewed the Examiner's discussion of the references at pages 3-5 of the Office Action. The Examiner admits that Gruenbaum does not disclose the recited second assignment device. The Examiner also does not cite any sections of Cakewalk that make up for the deficiencies of Gruenbaum.

The Examiner notes that the keyboard in Gruenbaum has indicia showing characters, symbols and numerical values (as illustrated in Fig. 7). However, these are the pre-set characters, symbols and numerical values. There is no disclosure or suggestion that these pre-set characters, symbols and numerical values can be assigned different characters, symbols or numerical values. The Examiner further cites Col. 14, lines 43-45 as disclosing the display of letters (corresponding to a scale) with sharps and flats. There is no disclosure or suggestion that the displayed sharps and flats were assigned to given keys of Fig. 7. Indeed, it appears that the display is based on the selected display mode rather than an assignment of keys (see Col. 6, lines 43-47).

Third, Gruenbaum and Cakewalk fail to disclose "when one of the function modules is assigned to the operated key region, said execution device causes the input character, the input symbol or the input numerical value to be delivered to the function module assigned to the operated key region." As discussed above, Gruenbaum and Cakewalk fail to disclose assigning a function module to a key region and thus fail to disclose delivering an input to a function module assigned to the operated key region.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 3 and its new dependent claims 17 and 18 are not anticipated by or obvious in view of Gruenbaum and Cakewalk, either alone or in combination, for at least the reasons set forth above.
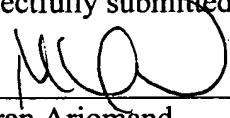
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If, for any reason, the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles telephone number (213) 892-5630 to discuss any steps necessary to place the application in condition for allowance.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no. 393032012500.

Dated: May 27, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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